



ASSOCIATION
OF AMERICAN
RAILROADS

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TRENDS

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1985 RAIL TRAFFIC DECLINES

WASHINGTON, January 7, 1986 -- Freight traffic on major U.S. railroads during 1985 totaled an estimated 884 billion ton-miles, down 4.1 percent from 1984, the Association of American Railroads reported today.

Carloadings for the year totaled 19,419,763, also down 4.1 percent from 1984.

The decline in 1985 traffic was attributed primarily to the fact that the national economy failed to continue the strong rate of growth it enjoyed in 1984. The 1985 ton-mile total was 6.7 percent higher than the 1983 ton-mile output.

On a quarterly basis, 1985 ton-miles trailed comparable periods of 1984 by 4.6 percent in the first quarter, 5.2 percent in the second quarter, and 7.4 percent in the third quarter, before posting a modest gain of nearly 1 percent in the fourth quarter. Ton-miles for the year decreased in all regions: by 3.1 percent in the East, 4.0 percent in the South and 4.4 percent in the West.

As shown on page 4, 17 of the 21 major commodity groups declined compared with 1984. The biggest losers were grain, down 241,842 cars (17.1 percent); metallic ores, down 123,050 cars (14.5 percent); and coal, down 134,086 cars (2.3 percent). The sharp drop in grain carloadings was due primarily to a decline in the volume of export

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grain. In the case of coal, the comparison between 1985 and 1984 loadings is somewhat distorted because coal traffic in 1984 reached a 27-year high due, in part, to heavy stockpiling in anticipation of a coal miners' strike that was averted.

The only commodity group to show a substantial increase over 1984 was motor vehicles and equipment. Heavy sales of new cars led to an increase of 69,270 carloadings (6.9 percent) in this category.

Ton-miles for the holiday week ended December 28 totaled 12.4 billion, 4.0 percent above the corresponding week of 1984. Carloadings were up 7.1 percent from 1984, and down 33.3 percent from the preceding non-holiday week of 1985.

Piggyback

The AAR also reported that piggyback freight traffic on major railroads for the week ended December 21 totaled 94,565 trailers and/or containers, up 4.4 percent from the corresponding week of 1984.

The cumulative volume of TOFC/COFC traffic for the first 51 weeks of the year was 4,454,565 trailers and/or containers, down 1.3 percent from 1984.

Following are carloadings of major railroads, by commodity groups, for the week ended 12/28/85:

	Loadings in Week ended December 28, 1985			Change from Corresponding Week 1984			Change from Preceding Week	
	Cars			Cars	Percent		Cars	Percent
Grain	17,482	I		508	3.0	D	8,710	33.3
Other farm products	2,870	D		136	4.5	D	1,512	34.5
Metallic ores	8,324	I		287	3.6	D	2,834	25.4
Coal	72,260	I		6,303	9.6	D	44,337	38.0
Crushed stone, gravel and sand	5,044	D		786	13.5	D	3,923	43.7
Nonmetallic minerals	6,966	D		1,623	18.9	D	3,387	32.7
Grain mill products	8,184	I		763	10.3	D	1,620	16.5
Food and kindred products	7,236	I		129	1.8	D	3,479	32.5
Primary forest products	5,878	D		823	12.3	D	4,819	45.1
Lumber and wood products except furniture	4,384	I		163	3.9	D	2,568	36.9
Pulp, paper and allied products	10,623	I		1,355	14.6	D	2,837	21.1
Chemicals and allied products	20,107	I		291	1.5	D	3,519	14.9
Petroleum products	3,754	I		377	11.2	D	972	20.6
Stone, clay and glass products	6,005	D		722	10.7	D	1,938	24.4
Coke	4,284	I		748	21.2	D	204	4.5
Metals and products	6,041	I		1,089	22.0	D	1,352	18.3
Motor vehicles and equipment	10,129	I		2,454	32.0	D	8,219	44.8
Waste and scrap materials	4,251	D		197	4.4	D	3,369	44.2
Forwarder and shipper association traffic	3,808	D		648	14.5	D	2,460	39.2
All other carloads	42,368	I		6,974	19.7	D	22,694	34.9
ICI traffic	70	D		21	23.1	D	28	28.6
Total Cars Loaded	250,068	I		16,485	7.1	D	124,781	33.3

Corresponding week of 1984 233,583

	1985	1984	% Change
Total Cars Loaded (52 weeks)	19,419,763	20,257,427	D 4.1
Estimated revenue ton-miles (in billions):			
51 Weeks ended December 21	871.7	909.7	D 4.2
Week ended December 28	12.4	11.9	I 4.0
52 Weeks cumulative	884.0	921.5	D 4.1

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Following are carloadings of major railroads, by commodity groups, for 52 weeks of 1985 and 1984:

	1985	1984		Incr/Decr. 1985 vs. 1984	
	Cars	Cars		Cars	Percent
Grain	1,175,346	1,417,188	D	241,842	17.1
Other farm products	189,028	209,105	D	20,077	9.6
Metallic ores	727,210	850,260	D	123,050	14.5
Coal	5,784,879	5,918,965	D	134,086	2.3
Crushed stone, gravel and sand	613,184	587,513	I	25,671	4.4
Nonmetallic minerals	572,034	608,468	D	36,434	6.0
Grain mill products	531,226	547,575	D	16,349	3.0
Food and kindred products	565,570	561,026	I	4,544	0.8
Primary forest products	585,774	697,417	D	111,643	16.0
Lumber and wood products except furniture	359,802	371,909	D	12,107	3.3
Pulp, paper and allied products	712,947	763,146	D	50,199	6.6
Chemicals and allied products	1,242,878	1,272,616	D	29,738	2.3
Petroleum products	238,100	246,478	D	8,378	3.4
Stone, clay and glass products	530,551	560,594	D	30,043	5.4
Coke	252,245	264,648	D	12,403	4.7
Metals and products	444,086	475,222	D	31,136	6.6
Motor vehicles and equipment	1,079,254	1,009,984	I	69,270	6.9
Waste and scrap materials	437,311	482,964	D	45,653	9.5
Forwarder and shipper association traffic	334,708	388,389	D	53,681	13.8
All other carloads	3,035,537	3,012,985	I	22,552	0.7
LCL traffic	8,093	10,975	D	2,882	26.3
Total Cars Loaded	19,419,763	20,257,427	D	837,664	4.1

Estimated revenue ton-miles
(in billions):

	1985	1984	% Change
First quarter	220.5	231.1	D 4.6
Second quarter	222.8	235.0	D 5.2
Third quarter	216.8	234.0	D 7.4
Fourth quarter	223.8	221.7	I 0.9
Year	884.0	921.5	D 4.1